



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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RABBITS CAN BE RAISED TO SUPPLY MEAT AT HOME OR FOR MARKET SALE

The production of fryer rabbits can be conducted on any scale, from small units of 3 or 4 does for supplementing the family meat supply to commercial rabbitries involving 300 to 500 or more animals, according to a recent report of the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior.

Fryer rabbit is attractive and nutritious, throughout the year, the report declares. A fryer, developed rapidly and properly finished for market, weighs 3-3/4 to 4-1/4 pounds at 2 months of age. The animal will dress 50 to 57 percent of its live weight, and about 77 percent of the product will be edible.

Individuals who raise rabbits for commercial purposes can, with care, dress the rabbits so that the fur also can be sold. White rabbits are most desirable because their skins usually bring higher prices.

In sections where domestic rabbit meat has been established, the fryer is popular, according to the report. The meat is sold at butcher shops and is served regularly at cafes, hotels, and hospitals. "Once constant supplies are available, the demand should increase," the report continues.

Comprehensive information on the production of fryer rabbits has been included in a mimeographed leaflet entitled "Fryer Rabbit Production," which was

issued by the Fish and Wildlife Service and is available to the public upon request.

The leaflet is based on data on 1,098 litters of New Zealand rabbits totaling 7,579 young, obtained during 5 years of investigation at the Rabbit Experiment Station administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service in Fontana, California. Written by George S. Templeton, director of the station and a biologist in the Section of Fur Resources, Division of Wildlife Research, the leaflet includes data on the selection of breeds, selection of feeds, feeding does and young, and other important information.

Diagrams show how self-feeders can be constructed inexpensively at home.

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